Cornelia Hall

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For the Myrtle.

Old Windy Winter's New Year's Wish.

I AM here
To give you warning,
That it is
The New Year's morning!
I was here when he came,
I'll be here when he goes,
But I'll take myself off,
With my winds and snows,
And leave you awhile,
With this bright new comer,
To be cheered by the smiles
Of a spring and a summer.
I must leave with you,
A parting token;
Before my farewell
Here is spoken.
This curious present,
I am weaving now:
You can't see me do it,
And I shan't tell you how.
My work, I really
Don't wish to conceal,
And I own, I am trying
Quite hard to congeal
The water that lies in your
Ponds and lakes;
And fashion it into large,
Solid cakes
Of perfectly pure and
Beautiful ice;
So blue and so clear and
Exceedingly nice!
And this gift that I take
So much pains to prepare;
Will be yours to enjoy
If you take proper care.
Then when I have left
For my far northern home,
And the fierce, glowing heats
Of summer have come;
When beneath the sun's rays,
You wearily sink;
Will you not sometimes,
Gratefully think
Of him who furnished
The ways and means
For your cooling drinks
And your fine ice-creams
You will think of me then,
And not quake and quiver,
And you'll swallow my ice
And not shake and shiver.
But hark! I hear
A merry shout!
From many a full heart
Ringing out!
The New Year's presents
Scattered round,
And kindest wishes
Now abound.
Well, I must hasten
And end my chat,
I've much to do
With this and that.
Before I go, just let
Me say,
I hope you'll all
Enjoy this day.
And children, I always
Have understood;
If you would be happy,
You must be good.
Now this is my New Year's wish
To-day,
That you girls and boys may love well
To stray
In that path, where Goodness
Has fixed her home;
Where bright eyed Truth
With her pleasant tone
Will offer her hand with an
Honest face,
So lead you over each
Slippery place,
Where the bitter fruits of black
Falsehood grow,
To that spot where the flowers
Of Honesty glow.
You have my best wishes,
And with Truth for your guide,
And goodness keeping bright watch

By your side;
Your days will be happy,
Your years will be bright!
Then try, little people
To do what is right,
Now I'll bid you good morning,
Hark! the sleigh-bells I hear!
The prancing horses are harnessed,
They soon will be near!
Then set off on your sleigh-ride,
O'er my path way of snow;
And good-bye to you all,
For I too must go.

Fannie Firefly.

For the Myrtle.

Meddling with Tools.

"OH see, Ben. We can have a good time now. The carpenter's have gone to their dinner, and left all their tools in the yard. We can go and see how well we can use them."

"They won't like it if we touch their tools."

"I don't care whether they like it or not."

"I guess you will care, if you are caught at it, and get your ears boxed."

"But I won't get caught at it. Didn't I tell you that the carpenters were gone to dinner?"

"Well, they won't stay at dinner all day."

"Neither will I stay there playing with their tools all day."

"I think you had better let the tools alone, Joe."

"I won't let them alone. You can come and play with me, or let it alone, just as you like. But keep your advice to yourself. I don't want to hear it."

As Joe said these words, he clambered over the fence that separated him from the place where the men had been at work.

Ben watched him with eager eyes. Though he had thought himself strong enough to resist the temptation, he found his resolution wavering, when he saw Joe really in the carpenter's place with the tools in his hands.

"Oh, this is a splendid plane," said Joe. "It takes a shaving off this board quicker than you can wink your eye. Just come over here and try it."

This remark finished Ben's temptation. He sprang over the fence, almost before he knew what he was doing, and was in the enclosure beside his companion.

"Just try this plane," said Joe, "and see if I didn't tell the truth about it."

Ben took the plane and gave it one shove. But he threw it down, saying:

"That's too heavy work to be fun. I'd rath- do something else."

"You must be weak in the joints if you can't whip shavings off a board with that plane," said Joe.

"I didn't say I couldn't do it. I said it wasn't fun."

"It's fun for me," said Joe seizing the plane again and making it almost fly over the board. "That's what I call fun and good fun."

"You may keep at it then. For my part I prefer some thing higher."

Joe was soon of this opinion. There was a variety of tools in the place, and as he saw Ben trying a large augur which he had found, and getting on toward a success in boring with it, he threw down the plane and ran to Ben.

"Oh let me try that. It seems real fun to make that go round and round."

"I thought you liked the plane. Why didn't you keep to it!"

"Does it follow that I must do one thing forever because I liked it at first?" said Joe pettishly.

"Let me try the augur a minute."

"Won't you wait till I am done with it? I don't see any reason that you should shove me away from a thing that I am playing with in order that you may be pleased."

"Didn't I come in here first, and so haven't I the best right to have what I want?"

"No. The tools are no more yours than they are mine. Because you happened to get over the fence first, is that any reason that you should have everything your own way afterward?"

"I should think I might have my choice of things to play with. For you would never have been in here at all if it hadn't been for me."

"Well, you won't have your own choice, and that's just the end of it. So play with something else and be satisfied until I get through with this augur."

Joe felt very surly about having to give up. But he saw that Ben was in no mood to yield, and he concluded to make the best of necesity.

He seized a saw and a small piece of board that was lying near it, and said:

"Have your old augur if you want it. I don't care for it now. I'll make a box out of this board and then I can carry it away with me."

Ben felt a little envious at this announcement, especially as the augur was beginning to turn rather hard, and he cared little for it after the opposition to his having it ceased.

"I'll make me a box too," said he, dropping the augur, and picking up a board that lay at his feet.

"I'd like to see you make a box without the saw," said Joe, holding up the saw which he was using in a most aggravating manner.

"You'd better hold your peace, or I'll take that saw away from you."

"I'd like to see you take it away," said Joe scornfully.

Ben was stronger than Joe, and he thought he could master him in a struggle, but on second thought he concluded that it would be as well to let the time that it would take to get it, would be lost from the little time they had with the tools.

"I don't want your old saw," he said with a very indifferent voice.

"Sour grapes," said Joe.

Ben pretended not to hear this remark and taking up a hammer that was at hand commenced driving nails into a piece of timber.

When Joe was left alone he soon tired of the saw, seeing that he was making very little headway toward getting his box done and could by no possibility finish it before the men returned from dinner.

"You can have this saw now if you want it, Ben," he said, throwing the saw down.

"Oh! your box is done?" said Ben in a tantalizing way.

"No, it is not done. And what's more I'm not going to finish it."

"You're a great carpenter to begin a job and break off in the middle of it."

"I never said I was a carpenter."

"Well, what are you going to do next?"

"I am going to try this broad axe."

As Joe said this he turned toward the axe, and was just laying his hand on it, when Ben sprang toward it, saying:

"Let that axe be. I was just going to take that myself."

"No, I'll not let it be," said Joe seizing it firmly. "What right have you to see me about to take?"

"I don't care to talk about rights. But the axe I am bound to have."

"Get unbound then, for the axe you will not have."

"We'll see," said Ben, springing upon Joe, just as he had taken hold of the handle of the axe firmly. "We'll see whether you are going to tell me what I shall or shall not have."

Joe was very quick in his motions, and though he was not as strong as Ben, he could sometimes have his way when they came to hand and hand contest, by the dexterity with which he moved.

But he was hampered now by having the axe in one hand. As the grasp tightens and struggle increases he still clings to the axe.

Ben did not at first lay hold of it. He seized Joe by the collar of his coat, and giving him a severe shaking, said:

"Drop that axe. You may as well give it up first as last, for I am bound to have it."

"No, you'll not have it. I am not going to be always under your thumb."

Ben saw how determined Joe was. But this only made him the more eager to have his way. Seizing the handle of the axe, he tried to force it out of Joe's hand.

For a moment the struggle was very fierce, and then the boys fell. Joe went under still holding on to the axe. Ben fell upon it, striking his head on the sharp edge, and making a terrible gash just over his right eye.

Their screams brought a crowd of people to the spot, and he was taken up and carried home, the wound bleeding all the time fearfully.

No one pitied him. They all understood how it was that he had got his hurt, and they said:

"It will be a good lesson for him. Let him keep his hands off other people in future."

Ben got well very slowly, for the gash was a very bad one, and when it had healed, it left an ugly scar, which his companions used to call "Cain's mark."

But the lesson, like many another hard lesson of life, did the boy good. The outward deformity worked an inward reform, and Ben was a better man because of the scar than he would otherwise have been.

Mrs. E. M. Bruce.

A THOROUGHLY honest man will not lie even to his dog, or in any way betray the brute's confidence.

For the Myrtle.

The Birds' Christmas.

"LET'S give the birds their Christmas treat!"
She gathered up the sheaves of wheat,
To fast:n where the birds might eat
On every vane and steeple;
She climbed the roof all undismayed,
The peasant-fathers task to aid,—
So kept the little Swedish maid
The custom of her people.

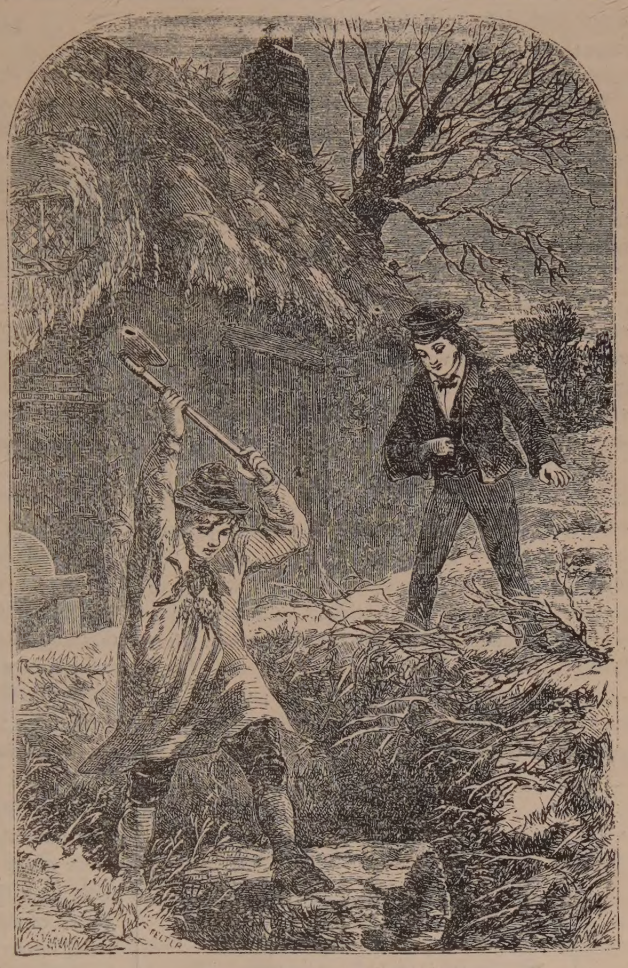
The birds flew forth that Christmas morn,
Mid waving sheaves of wheat and corn,
Nor knew that Christ the King was born
That day its gladness bringing;
They only saw the stores of food,
And ate their fi'l and found it good,
And with unconscious gratitude,
Poured forth their joy in singing.

And one above who watches all,—
The sparrow's flight, the sparrow's fall,
Who hears the ravens when they call,
And feeds his smallest creatures,
He to whose love all thanks belong,
Heard the full floods of happy song,
Swelling above a thankless throng
That had the birds for teachers.

But where, beneath the tuneful crowd
A little heart in reverence bowed
That could but speak its thanks aloud,
In childhood's lisping phrases,
That little maiden's voiceless prayer,
Was sweeter to His love and care
Than all the music of the air,
That pierced the sky with praises.

H. A. B.

———o-o-o———



For the Myrtle.

The Stolen Pound of Beef.

Johnnie's mamma sent him to the butcher's shop to buy a pound of beef.

"Don't stop on the way," said she, "but come home as fast as you can."

Johnnie bought the beef, and started home with it, but he forgot what his mamma had said.

He stopped to look in a window where there were a great many pretty toys, and whilst he was gazing at a very fine hobby horse, and wishing he could have it, a poor hungry dog came quietly behind Johnnie, and stole the meat out of the basket, which he had set on the ground.

When Johnnie lifted the basket, he found that the pound of beef was gone, and saw the dog running down the street with it in his mouth. He went home and told his mother what had happened.

"Well," said his mother, "I am very sorry, but we must all go without meat for dinner. I shall give your little brothers and sisters some oranges, but you must have nothing better than dry bread and a glass of milk. I hope you will obey me the next time I send you to get meat for dinner."

"I'll never stop on the way again, mamma," said Johnnie.

And I am sure he kept his word.

———◆———

CROSSES are ladders leading to heaven.

For the Myrtle.

Work Before Play.

"THERE were two kinds of pastime we used to have in the winter," said uncle John, "and I don't know which was best. One was sliding down hill;—every boy knows what that is. But the other the boys now-a-days don't know so much about."

"What is it?"

"It was seeing the woodpile in the door yard grow smaller."

"All the while we were going to school, the men would work in the woods cutting down and drawing up the logs for the woodpile that was to last the year around. Then it was the business of the boys to cut this up into lengths for the

stove and split into fine sticks and pile it up smooth and solid under the shed. This was no "boy's play," I can tell you.

We never got fairly at it until the winter school was done. Then between that time and sugaring we worked at it every day in the forenoon.

We used to have some time for play even then; and in order to get the most work done, and the most play, we usually took a stint.

"What is that?"

"Well, well; don't know what a stint is! Why we used to set ourselves a certain amount of work to do before we stopped, and then go at it and work for dear life until it was done. We always stinted ourselves, if we wanted to get off to play. It made the work almost as jolly as play.

Sometimes a boy would come after us to go sliding, then we would make him take hold and work too. We used to stint ourselves to pile up so long a pile, or to cut up such a log; and the more hands the jollier work. When it was done we went off merrily to our sliding, and had twice as good a time as the village boys who had been sliding all day."

"Yes, that's so," said little John; "I always have the best time at play when I've done a good lot of work beforehand."

H. A. B.

The Little Maltese Kitten.

WOULD you hear of our little drab kitten,
Then hark to the story I tell:
We found her, one cold autumn morning,
Clinging fast to the rocks, in the well.

Her suit of drab clothing was dripping,
And her aspect was woful and sad,
Having spent quite a time in the cavern,
Do you wonder her temper was bad?

Though we sought her with best of intentions,
With our hearts full of pity and grief,
She met all our kindness with scorning,
With scratching and spitting,—in brief.

But now she has forgotten her peril;
She is such a sweet little pet,
I am sure, should you see her, dear children,
Upon her your hearts you would set.

She is sleek, and she's smart, and so pretty!
There never was known such a cat.
And her name? I've no doubt you will like it—
It's not rug, nor carpet, but—"Mat."

And when by the fire she lies purring,
All curled in a ball soft and round,
Though 'twere tiger or leopard skin, surely
No prettier "mat" could be found.

How a Boy Wakes Up.

There he lies in his crib, nut-brown boy of four years. He sleeps the sleep of healthy childhood. In the same position he lay when he dropped off into unconsciousness, one arm under his head, one leg kicked out from under the coverlet. He is perfectly motionless. His round cheek pillows itself on the extended arm, and his leg seems to have been arrested in the middle of the last restless kick, as the curtain fell over his blue eyes and he was asleep. He is in deep sleep. You can scarcely perceive the regular respiration. A train of cars thundered by without notice—he might be carried across the street without awakening.

A healthy boy, sound asleep, is an interesting object. Particularly, if he is your boy. For the time, his tremendous energies are at rest. His noisy clatter, his ceaseless motions, his endless wants, his fountains of laughter are all quiet now. One can take a good look at him now.

It is morning; daylight streams into the windows. The sun shines on the hill-tops. The sounds of stirring life are beginning to be heard about the house. Watch the boy. Still as motionless as a figure of marble. As you look, the gates of sleep are suddenly unlocked. He is awake in a twinkle—awake all over. His blue eyes are wide open and bright—his lips part with a shout—his legs fly out in different directions—his arms are in rapid motion—he flops over with a spring—in ten seconds he has turned a couple of summersets, and presents before you a living illustration of perpetual motion. There is no deliberate yawning, no slow stretching of indolent limbs, no lazy rubbing of sleepy eyes, no turning over for just another snooze, no gradually becoming awake about it. With a snap like a pistol shot he is thoroughly awake and kicking—wide awake to the top of each particular hair.

The wonderful thing about it is its suddenness and completeness.

A LADY applied to the eminent philantrophist of Bristol, Richard Reynolds, on behalf of a little orphan boy. After he had given liberally, she said, "When he is old enough, I will teach him to name and thank his benefactor." "Stop," said the good man, "thou art mistaken. We do not thank the clouds for rain. Teach him to look higher, and thank Him who giveth both the clouds and the rain."

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—The members of the Columbus Avenue Sunday School and their friends enjoyed Christmas eve at the vestry of their church. The main feature of the entertainment was the reading of "Little Gretchen" by one of the teachers—the reading being accompanied by illustrative tableaux. The remainder of the entertainment consisted of Christmas tableaux and singing, and a brief time was given to the exhibition of Mrs. Jarley's wax works. About nine o'clock the doors of the small vestry were opened and the eating of ice cream and cake closed the entertainment.

—An entertainment was given Christmas evening in the vestry of the Shawmut Universalist Church. There was a large company assembled both of the children and members of the parish. The vestry was appropriately decorated with evergreens, but what attracted the attention of all the eager young eyes, were the three large and brilliant lighted Christmas trees which were loaded with presents from the good Santa Claus. After a few pleasant remarks by the superintendent, Mr. Charles Caverly, Jr., wishing all present a "merry Christmas," a short address was made by the pastor, Mr. L L. Briggs. A Christmas carol was then sung by the school, which was followed by recitations and music by the younger pupils. One little Christmas song, given by three little sisters, two singing while the other presided at the piano, gave a great deal of pleasure to the audience. The piece called "The Star of Bethlehem," formed one of the most pleasant features of the evening. This was given by eight pupils, the whole school taking part in the singing. This was followed by a song from the school choir. Then came the distribution of gifts, which made a great many little hearts glad, and occasioned much merriment among the older portion of the company. After the distribution, which occupied some time, the company lingered a while for social intercourse, and at a rersonable hour went home, having passed a very pleasant evening *M. C. S*

—The church at the Highlands was most elegantly trimmed. All around the galleries and ceiling were festoons of evergreen, and from the centre were suspended strings of green reaching the remotest corners, and daping and breaking the vacant spaces in an agreeable manner. On the sides of the galleries were beautiful wreaths of flowers, in the centre similar adornings, and across the chancel were two great festoons of South Carolina moss, a marvel of unique beauty. On the singer's gallery were boquets of flowers and a harp and anchor of the choicest flowers. On the pulpit in front was a splendid cross of green intermingled with white japonicas, while over the pulpit was a large anchor in green, suspended directly above the minister's head. On either side ot the pulpit were pots of rarest flowers, from which depended running vines. The pastor, Dr. Patterson, gave a discourse,

—There was a Christmas Eve service in Salem, conducted by the pastor, Dr. Bolles. His text was from Matthew, 2: 2, and his theme was an eloquent exposition upon the significance of the symbolism of the Cross and King as typical of the relations of Christ to the Christian world. The decorations about the altar, prepared and arranged by a member of the parish, were unusually attractive. A cross in front of the altar and another in the rear upon the wall, were particularly noteworthy.

—Christmas Eve was celebrated by our church in Franklin. Supper was served for the Sunday School, and parish generally in the vestry of the church at half past six P. M. After an hour's social enjoyment, all entered the church, where the religious services began at half past seven. The church was elaborately and most beautifully trimmed, and adorned with Christmas emblems, made from evergreen, with boughs of holly, with their rich red berries, smilax, flowers, &c. Great praise is due to the ladies and gentlemen who assisted in the work of decoration, and in making this Christmas Festival in every way one long to be remembered. A large tree, loaded with gifts, stood on either side of the altar. The services consisted of singing appropriate carols and hymns, with the usual responses and prayers, and an address, or story, concerning St. Nicholas, by the pastor, Rev. A. St. John Chambré, who is also the Superintendent of the School. At the close of the address the presents were distributed, to the joy of all. Nor was the pastor forgotten. He received many and valuable gifts—blessed evidence of kindly friends. The church was crowded with interested and happy faces. On Christmas Day, at half past ten A. M., special Christmas services were held, additional, and beautiful decorations were about the altar. Indeed the church was radiant, and fittingly suggested the ivy of Christian hope in the advent of the Son of God. After a sermon by the pastor, the Holy Communion was administered, participated in by not only the members of the Universalist but of the other churches of the place.

—A Christmas tree loaded with presents, speaking, singing, dialogues and tableaux, and a full house made happy all who participated and all who were present, in the vestry of the Abington church Christmas eve. A present to the pastor, Rev. Mr. Preble, having regard to a possibly inclement winter, was a chief feature.

—The society in Brighton made account of Christmas eve, with an entertainment for the children. A Christmas tree well loaded with presents, was the principal feature. The pastor, Rev. Mr. Wilson, made some remarks appropriate to the day and the occasion. After this a general collation was served. It was a happy occasion.

—The Sunday School in East Cambridge, provided a Christmas tree for the children, and the little folks were made happy by the reception of useful and ornamental presents. On the following day,—but as part of the occasion—Rev. Sumner Ellis and wife were "surprised," in a quiet and acceptable way, at their residence, by being made recipients of several rich and elegant gifts from the parish.

—Our young parish in Jamaica Plain fitly commemorated the Anniversary. There was, the centre of attraction, the Christmas tree, with a present for every member of the School. There were also singing, recitations and readings—all by the children.

Christmas at Melrose added to the customary form of a Christmas tree, a spectacular surprise at once new and beautiful. A light frame, semicircular in form, tastefully trimmed in evergreen, was so arranged as to exhibit every article to the eye at one view. When the curtain suddenly dropped on the well lighted scene, the effect on the little folks was magical. Then followed the entry of Santa Claus and the distribution of his gifts. The assemblage of children and their friends was large, quite filling the vestry; and all went away delighted with the evening's exercise.

—The Sunday School in North Bridgewater had a happy occasion Christmas eve—the feature of special attraction being the fabled "Shoe," of enormous dimensions, and properly inhabited. There were presents for all. The vestry was beautifully trimmed.

—Our church in Yarmouthport, held special services for Christmas. The children of the School and their friends assembled in Village Hall on the evening of the 24th, where they had a Christmas tree and a social time. The evening of the 25th was set apart for appropriate services, in the church—conducted by the pastor, Rev. C. A. Bradley.

Lives of the Apostles.

LESSON XLIII.—PAUL.

Question. — To what place did Paul go, when he left Corinth?

Answer. — Acts xviii. 19.

Q. — Who went with him?

A. — Acts xviii. 18.

Q. — To what place did Paul go, upon his arrival at Ephesus?

A. — Acts xviii. 19.

Q. — What did he do there?

A. — Acts xviii. 19.

NOTE. He endeavored to prove to them that Jesus was the promised Christ.

Q. — What did the Jews wish him to do.

A. — Acts xviii. 20.

Q. — Did Paul comply with their request?

A. — Acts xviii. 20.

Q. — Why not?

A. — Acts xviii. 21.

NOTE. This was the Feast of the Passover.

Q. — What did he promise those he left?

A. — Acts xviii. 21.

Q. — At what port in Palestine, did Paul land?

A. — Acts xviii. 22.

NOTE. Cesarea is about seventy miles by land, from Jerusalem. It was the nearest seaport to that city.

Q. — What did Paul go up to Jerusalem for?

A. — Acts xviii. 22.

Q. — Where did he go, after he had visited the church at Jerusalem?

A. — Acts xviii. 22.

Q. — What did he do, after his visit to the church that sent him out?

A. — Acts xviii. 23.

Q. — What came to Ephesus, after the departure of Paul?

A. — Acts xviii. 24.

Q. — Where did he come from?

A. — Acts xviii. 24.

Q. — Of what nation was he?

A. — Acts xviii. 24.

Q. — For what was he noted?

A. — Acts xviii. 24.

Q. — Had he known anything of Christ?

A. — Acts xviii. 25.

Q. — How far had he been instructed?

A. — Acts xviii. 25.

Q. — Where did Apollus speak boldly?

A. — Acts xviii. 26.

Q. — Who heard him there?

A. — Acts xviii. 26.

Q. — What did Aquila and Priscilla do for him?

A. — Acts xviii. 26.

Q. — Where did Apollos wish to go?

A. — Acts xviii. 27.

Q. — What did Aquila and Prisciila do for him?

A. — Acts xviii. 27.

Q. — To what city in Achaia, did Apollos go?

A. — Acts xix. 1.

Q. — What did he do for the believers in Corinth?

A. — Acts xviii. 27.

Q. — What effect did his teaching have upon the Jews at Corinth?

A. — Acts xviii. 28.

Q. — What did he show them to be the doctrine of their scriptures?

A. — Acts xviii. 28.

Enigma.

I am composed of 18 letters.
My 1, 11, 2, is an insect.
My 3, 9, 17, 6, is to keep.
My 12, 13, 7, 8, 16, 8, 18, is anon.
My 3, 4, 10, 2, all ought to love.
My 9, 14, 17, is a liquid.
My 15, 4, 10, 11, is an invitation.
My whole are some of the last recorded words of Jesus.

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